

## Attachment A - Examples – Performance Alignment, Performance Objectives and Performance Standards/Measures

### PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ALIGNMENT

1. **Alignment**— Accomplishment of the objectives in this element contributes to the accomplishment of the following USDA and NRCS management initiatives. **USDA Management Initiatives:** Improve Human Capital Management; Improve Financial Management; Expand Electronic Government; and Eliminate Improper Payments. **NRCS Management Initiatives:** Human Capital; Electronic Government; and Financial Performance and SES Objective: Meets the NRCS or staff office requirements as stated in the President's Management Agenda and other Departmental initiatives.

**Links to 2008 State Conservationist Performance Objective (4):** Provides leadership and vision across the State to increase conservation benefits achieved through effective and efficient implementation of technical and financial resources and to increase employee satisfaction as measured through productivity and feedback from employees

2. **Alignment:** In support of USDA's Civil Rights Performance Plan and NRCS Management Initiative: Ensuring Civil Rights.

**Links to 2008 State Conservationist Performance Objective (6):** Implement and track strategies to move NRCS closer to reflect the Civilian Labor Force and strategies that are designed to provide parity in service delivery. Track and analyze workforce diversity trends, including retention, promotions, and participation in leadership development programs, training, and other developmental opportunities.

3. **Alignment:** Accomplishment of the objectives in this element contributes to the accomplishment of USDA **Strategic Goal 6:** Protect and Enhance the Nation's Natural Resource Base and Environment, and **NRCS Strategic Goals 1-6.**

**Links to 2008 State Conservationist Performance Objective (5): Develop** and implement strategies to increase participation in NRCS conservation programs/projects and to maintain and improve customer relations.

4. **Alignment:** Accomplish of the performance objectives included in this element will allow NRCS to achieve its objective of Developing and delivering new or revised Natural Resources Conservation technology, which contributes to the strategic goal of High Quality, Productive Soils.

**Links to SES / Current Fiscal Year Objective:** Develop and deliver new or revised Natural Resources Conservation technology

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### **PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE EXAMPLES**

- ✓ Achieve results pertaining to the President's government-wide management initiatives intended to improve effectiveness and efficiency in the State. Implement a State scorecard for tracking progress in the strategic management of human capital.
- ✓ Develop and implement an Administrative Business Plan that aligns with the State Business Plan.
- ✓ Provide leadership and management to assigned staff that effectively allocates workload; identifies and addresses personnel issues; and motivates, develops, and rewards employees resulting in an increase in employee satisfaction as measured through productivity and feedback from employees and customers.
- ✓ Provide conservation planning, technical and financial assistance to private land owners and producers to achieve annual targets for Budget and Performance Integration (BPI) goals, on-time delivery of program services; on-scheduled implementation of participant contracts and increases in putting conservation on the ground.
- ✓ Provide guidance to leadership and staff across NRCS on performance management to meet the Proud-to-Be V goals established for the Strategic Management of Human Capital.
- ✓ Develop and Implement a National Recruitment Strategy by June 30, 2008.
- ✓ Increase customer participation in NRCS programs by 20%.
- ✓ Complete and rollout the Agency supported Manure Management Planner (MMP) by established due dates.
- ✓ Complete budget for Organization Name for the next fiscal year by June 15, 2008.
- ✓ Develop an 5 year investment strategy by May 15, 2008.

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**PERFORMANCE STANDARDS/ MEASURES EXAMPLES**

**Civil Rights (Supervisor):**

- ✓ Provides Civil Rights/EEO/Sexual Harassment/Diversity information (USDA/NRCS materials) to employees through information sessions, staff meetings, etc, at least twice a year
- ✓ Ensures that employees receive required training within established timeframes. Encourages employees to attend training to increase interpersonal skills; i.e., cross-cultural communication, negotiation, dispute resolution, problem solving, active listening, etc.
- ✓ Reviews the USDA's Civil Rights Policy with employees at least 2 times a year to ensure that customers and employees are treated in accordance with the policy
- ✓ Responds to issues/actions/allegations according to agency procedures and within established timeframes with no more than 3 exceptions
- ✓ Meets USDA/NRCS established Civil Right/EEO goals for recruitment, selection, promotion, training, awards and other personnel activities

**Communications:**

- ✓ Communicates clearly and shares accurate information 80-90% of the time
- ✓ Responds to general program questions within 48 hours with no more than 6-8 exceptions. Elevates more complex questions to supervisor, team leader, or other individual responsible within 2 hours of inquiry
- ✓ Schedules staff meetings on a regular basis and after major program announcements and more often if required
- ✓ Prepares written documents that are clear, concise and understandable as well as following prescribed procedures and within established timeframes with no more than 3 exceptions
- ✓ Regularly shares program for which one is responsible with co-workers to increase staff awareness of all program areas within timeframes established by management 90% of the time
- ✓ Resolves disputes and problems with others through use of problem solving, conflict resolution and negotiation

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### **Customer Service:**

- ✓ Feedback from Customers indicate that:
  - their needs were understood
  - services/solutions provided addressed their needs
  - NRCS worked collaboratively with them to address their needs
  - they were satisfied with the quality of service delivered
  - they were satisfied with the quantity of information delivered, including that the information provided increased the customers' understanding of NRCS programs
- ✓ No more than X calls escalated to the next level due to non-responsiveness
- ✓ Maintains clear communication with customers regarding mutual expectations and follow through. Monitors customer satisfaction
- ✓ Works with customers to resolve problems to satisfaction of both parties
- ✓ Takes responsibility for correcting customer-service problems

### **Execution of Duties:**

- ✓ Prepares reports that are accurate and complete within established timeframes with no more than 1-3 exceptions
- ✓ In accordance with policy and procedures, processes payments within 24 hours of receipt
- ✓ Achieves or demonstrates progress toward ensuring that no improper payments are issued
- ✓ Achieves or demonstrates progress towards working to providing information about program benefits to producers to ensure that they can make informed decisions (i.e., newsletters, counter information, producer meetings, meetings with producer organizations, etc.)
- ✓ Completes all tasks required within established timeframes 95% of the time
- ✓ Meet Federal contracting regulations with respect to processing, follow through and life span with no more than 3 exceptions
- ✓ Processes requests in a timely manner 90% of the time

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### **Individual Contributions to the Team:**

- ✓ Regularly cooperates with coworkers and others in meeting commitments and accomplishing assigned work on time; i.e., sharing information freely
- ✓ Fosters productive and cooperative working relationships by showing understanding, courtesy, tact and politeness to others with no more than 6-8 valid complaints
- ✓ Consistently raises concerns in constructive manner and offers potential solutions

### **Research and Analysis:**

- ✓ Asks questions for clarification and makes suggestions for implementation within the timeframes established by management
- ✓ Conducts research and data gathering in response to issues and other assignments that are complete, accurate, and relevant within the established timeframes 95% of the time
- ✓ Analyzes data to identify weaknesses, patterns, and trends that are communicated to supervisor and other required staff within established timeframes
- ✓ Assembles, index, and organizes work to expedite analysis and develops quality summaries with no more than X revisions by supervisors 90% of the time

### **Resource Management:**

- ✓ The budget contains well-justified descriptions of budget requests, is accurate, and meets all the specifications as outlined by the CFO.
- ✓ Manages within established budget for program, function, or work assigned; notifies appropriate individual of potential budget shortfalls at least 60 days in advance
- ✓ Budget object codes are correctly entered 97% of the time
- ✓ Travel, training and other administrative forms are properly completed, timely, and followed-up on to ensure proper processing 97% of the time
- ✓ Plans resource needs accurately 97% of the time
- ✓ Bills are paid accurately so that payments are not deemed improper
- ✓ Plans projects or other assignments, monitors progress and completes projects within schedule and quality goals 95% of the time

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### **Team Leadership:**

- ✓ Provides leadership or oversees subordinate or co-workers' work and achieves desired results 90% of the time
- ✓ Plans projects, monitors or reviews work within schedule and quality goals for assigned program or functional work 90% of the time
- ✓ Demonstrates collaborative efforts by ensuring team regularly shares information and provides other support. Holds joint staff meeting on a regular basis as established by management.

### **Program Management:**

- ✓ Processes transactions within established goals with no more than 3 exceptions
- ✓ Reviews are conducted and reports are filed and submitted within established timeframes
- ✓ Applications/ transactions are processed within required timeframes
- ✓ Ensures that payments are made within required timeframes
- ✓ Ensures that staff is fully trained in the program areas for which staff is responsible
- ✓ Manure Management Planner is completed and rolled-out by established due date and within budget. X to X number of staff and technical service providers (TSPs) are trained and provide feedback that they have the knowledge to use and/or using the tool.

### **Supervision:**

- ✓ Schedules staff meetings regularly and after major program announcements or more frequently if required
- ✓ Prioritizes work of staff to deal with workload shifts and to ensure mission-critical work is accomplished with 95% accuracy
- ✓ 100% of new employees receive training on operational and procedural requirements within established timeframes
- ✓ Assesses and identifies employees' training needs and training is planned and communicated to staff
- ✓ 100% of employees receive required training within established guidelines

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- ✓ 100% of individual performance plans are linked to NRCS's goals and explained to employees by the required deadlines
- ✓ Ensures the management process for increased staff productivity and satisfaction during the fiscal year to include: regular review and adjustment as necessary of workload balance and location of staff; staff receiving technical, managerial, and administrative guidance; quality assurance systems that monitor activities, identify problem areas, and initiate actions within established/agreed timeframes; innovative solutions to resolve issues, improve management, or capitalize on emerging opportunities; periodic review of progress against goals; making adjustments to ensure that progress is sufficient to meet goals; setting priorities and goals; delegating appropriate authority, addressing resource needs; managing performance to include recognition and reward of employees as appropriate; ongoing feedback and applicable training for staff; escalation of issues/problems, when appropriate; and reviews for employee compliance with NRCS policy and Federal regulations
- ✓ 100% of performance plans for direct reports are aligned with organizational goals (NRCS Strategic Plan and State Business Plan), focus on expected results, are equitable, and are written, established and communicated in accordance with agency policy (meet SMART criteria) by XX/XX/XXXX. Employees are involved in the development of performance plans and/or specific performance
- ✓ Provides forum for regular communication with the staff to:
  - Establish an atmosphere that encourages open communication and supports both team work and individual effort
  - Inform employees of work unit objectives, Agency policies and procedures, important events and other pertinent information/issues
  - Discusses ideas and concerns with employees as well as current and potential customers
- ✓ Feedback from staff indicates that they:
  - Understand the Agency's direction, their State and division's goals and their role in achieving these goals; Understand specially what their supervisor expects of them; Were involved in developing their performance plans; Understand how well they are performing and where they need to improve; Have a performance appraisal that accurately reflects their performance; Have the necessary tools and resources to accomplish their work; Where they do not have what they need, they understand why;  
Have the skills and knowledge they need to do their jobs, or a plan to obtain them; are acknowledged and appreciated for good performance

### **Ethics**

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- ✓ Actively promote awareness and enforce strict adherence to ethics and standards of conduct statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures:
  - 100% of employees complete mandatory training by the established due dates
  - Financial disclosure notices are filed within established timeframes and a process exists for ensuring that 95 to 98% of employees that are required to file meet established deadline
  - Ensures 100% of workforce (Federal and contractors) have successfully completed the Computer Security Awareness and Privacy Refresher training by assigned due dates. New employees/contractors with access to IT systems receive a security briefing prior to access being granted
  - Action is taken within 48 hours of receipt for requests and information submitted by employees to insure determination of real, apparent, or potential conflicts of interest, and other ethics issues. Consults with the Office of Ethics and other appropriate resources as needed
  - Monitor submission of Employees forms and information in a timely matter to Ethics Advisors and that, where needed, approval is obtained prior to engaging in the activity
  - Takes appropriate discipline action for employee violations of statutes, regulations, policies or guidance

### **Safeguarded Personally Identifiable Information**

- ✓ Uses unique identifiers established for the Federal Government in the Central Contracting Registry for any contracts, grants, and for a business or individual, if available. Ensures that all records containing Social Security Numbers (SSNs) are safeguarded when the person's name SSN are combined